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Abraham Lincoln's Contemporaries

Simon Bolivar

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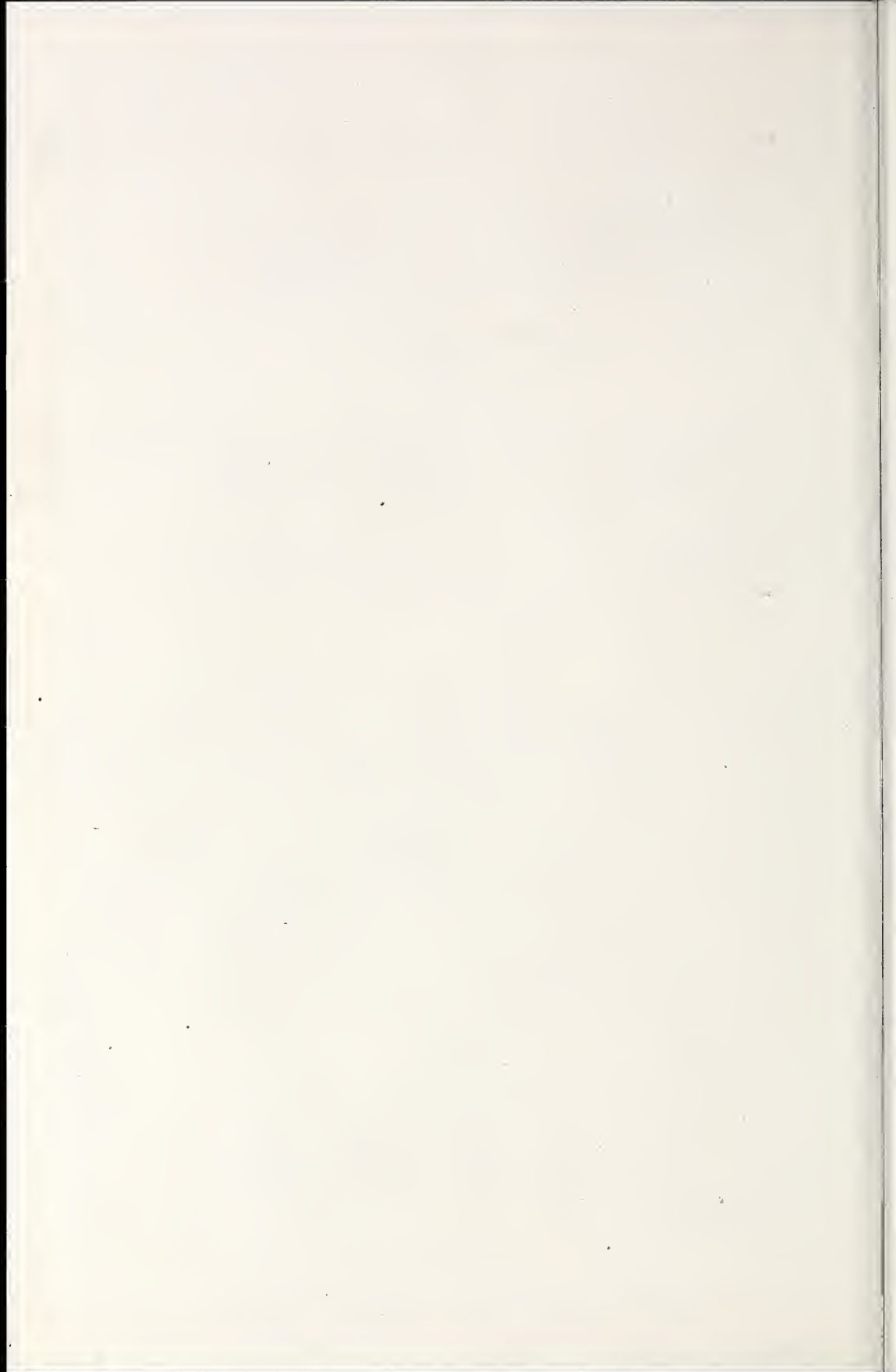
*One Hundred and Fifty-ninth
Anniversary of the Birth
of Simon Bolivar*

Address delivered by
Former Congressman Maurice H. Thatcher
of Kentucky, on July 24, 1942

Remarks of
Hon. Andrew J. May
of Kentucky
in the
House of Representatives
Wednesday, September 9, 1942

*Not printed
at Government
expense*

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Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 77th CONGRESS, SECOND SESSION

One Hundred and Fifty-ninth Anniversary of the Birth of Simon Bolivar

REMARKS

OF

HON. ANDREW J. MAY

ADDRESS BY FORMER CONGRESSMAN
MAURICE H. THATCHER, OF KENTUCKY,
ON JULY 24, 1942

Mr. MAY. Mr. Speaker, under leave accorded me to extend my remarks, I herewith include an address delivered by former Congressman Maurice H. Thatcher, of Kentucky, on the afternoon of July 24, 1942, the one hundred and fifty-ninth anniversary of the birth of the great South American liberator, Simon Bolivar. Upon the invitation and under the auspices of the Office of the Coordinator of Inter-American Affairs, the address was delivered on the afternoon of the anniversary date over WWDC in Washington, D. C., and on the evening of that day the Spanish translation of the address was by Mrs. Thatcher, wife of Mr. Thatcher, broadcast by short wave from Washington to all the countries of Latin America, thus reaching 125 stations in those lands.

The introductions over WWDC and the address follow:

REMARKS BY NORMAN REED, PROGRAM DIRECTOR
OF WWDC

Today marks the one hundred and fifty-ninth anniversary of the birth of Simon Bolivar, the Liberator. On this great occasion there are taking place festivities in New York, in front of the statue of the Liberator, in Central Park. All these festivities will be broadcast via short wave to the countries of the Americas as part of the program of the Coordinator of Inter-American Affairs.

Station WWDC is pleased to cooperate with our neighbors of the South, and we have invited Señor Alberto Barreto, of the Office of the Coordinator of Inter-American Affairs, to bring a distinguished guest, who will give you an interesting talk about the very close connection and understanding between the statesman, Henry Clay, and Gen. Simon Bolivar.

Señor Barreto will present Hon. Maurice H. Thatcher; now we give the microphone to him.

INTRODUCTION OF HON. MAURICE H. THATCHER
BY ALBERTO BARRETO, OF THE RADIO DIVISION,
OFFICE OF THE COORDINATOR OF INTER-AMERICAN AFFAIRS

Maurice H. Thatcher, a citizen of the State of Kentucky, and now residing in the city of Washington, served as member of the Isthmian Canal Commission and Head of the Department of Civil Administration of the Canal Zone (Civil Governor) during the years 1910, 1911, 1912, and 1913, while the Panama Canal was under construction. Afterward, during the 10 years, 1923-33, he was a Member of the Congress of the United States of America, from the State of Kentucky. In 1930 he went as a member of the Commission appointed by the President of the United States to represent his country in the presentation of the statue of Henry Clay to Venezuela. In recognition of his friendship for Latin-American countries and peoples, and his work and associations in that connection, he has been honored with the decorations and orders of several of the republics of Latin America, thus: That of del Libertador, of Venezuela; Al Merito, of Ecuador; and Vasco Nuñez de Balboa, of Panama.

And before I introduce Governor Thatcher I wish to announce that his speech, which you will now hear, will also be broadcast this evening in Spanish, by Señora Thatcher, his wife, by short wave, from Washington to the countries of the Americas, as part of an elaborate program in honor of Simon Bolivar. Señora Thatcher is also a Kentuckian, and their first home after their marriage was in the Canal Zone, where they resided during his work there in connection with the construction of the Panama Canal. There she learned the Spanish language, and ever since then her love for it and the Latin-American people has caused her to maintain her use and knowledge of the Castilian tongue.

And now, Governor Thatcher.

ADDRESS BY HON. MAURICE H. THATCHER

First, I must express my appreciation for the very great honor accorded me by the invitation to speak to friends and neighbors of Latin-American lands on this, the one hundred and fifty-ninth anniversary of the birth of Simon Bolivar.

In the brief period which is permitted on such an occasion, I cannot say much of in-

terest or value; and nothing, of course, which is new.

In the United States of America we love, admire, and revere the life and deeds of the South American liberator. We recognize in him a character of the most commanding force and genius; a great soldier, statesman, and leader; one who has tremendously helped to shape the destiny of the human race. Although, as was inevitable, the lights and shadows of success and failure attended his years of effort, he labored infinitely better than he ever realized; and, on the whole, his seeming failures, and his disappointments, were but the "accidentals" in the grand harmony of his mighty achievement; they but accentuate the overwhelming odds he was obliged to face in his fight for liberation of the Spanish-American colonies, and lend nobler light and emphasis to all he wrought. While San Martín, O'Higgins, Juárez, and many others magnificently shared in the work of Spanish-American liberation, a combination of circumstances and unique and outstanding gifts and qualities made Bolívar the soul and symbol of that work. The flow of time only serves to broaden and deepen his fame.

He was the father of the idea of solidarity of the American nations; and his plans and labors in that connection have constituted a basis of policy for these countries which has persisted and grown for more than a hundred years. Among the lands of the Western world there are no lords, overlords, or masters. All stand on equal terms. They are bound together by every tie and consideration of geographical, political, and economic interest; and they must, as well, become bound by every tie and consideration of cultural interest. Pan-Americanism means equality and sympathetic and effective cooperation. All of the American republics are founded on the same ideals of liberty and justice; and each of them must ever strive to realize, in the fullest and widest sense, those ideals; mindful, always, that the example of each affects, not only all of them but the world at large as well.

In December 1930, while I was serving in the Congress of my country as a Representative from the State of Kentucky, I was named as a member of the Commission appointed by President Hoover to journey to Caracas, and there present, in the name of our people and Government, a statue of Henry Clay to the United States of Venezuela. Clay—the great commoner—a Kentuckian, was the outstanding advocate, in the councils of his Nation, of the independence of the Latin-American colonies. Chiefly to his forceful and courageous leadership, and to his matchless eloquence, was due the recognition of these colonies as free and independent States. He was the warm friend and supporter of the Great Liberator, and lent him invaluable aid in his fight for independence. Myself a Kentuckian, I have been most happy to note in the Panama region, where it was once my privilege to dwell in connection with the

construction of the great Isthmian waterway, and in various Latin-American lands through which I have traveled—the very high affection and esteem in which Henry Clay is held by the people of these countries. The occasion in Caracas was memorable; and the sentiment then and there evinced for the great North American protagonist of Latin-American emancipation may be considered as typical of that of all the nations to the southward.

And before leaving this phase of the subject, may I be pardoned for stating the fact that Kentucky was the first State of my country to take official action favoring the independence and recognition of the then struggling colonies of Latin America. In 1817 the Governor of Kentucky recommended to the General Assembly that it formally express its sympathy for, and approval of, that independence; and such a resolution was promptly adopted. Again, during its session in 1820-21, the General Assembly passed a similar resolution. The first diplomatic agents and representatives from the United States of America to the nations evolved out of the South American revolutions for independence, were Kentuckians. In March 1821, President Monroe sent a message to Congress recommending formal recognition; and under Mr. Clay's powerful leadership in the Congress it was adopted, and the action of our Government was followed by other great nations; and the independence of our southern neighbors acknowledged and respected.

I may add, as another evidence of Kentucky's abiding sentiment on the subject, that our Congress, acting in response to the memorialization of the Kentucky General Assembly therefor, enacted the legislation providing for the execution and presentation to Venezuela of the indicated statue.

My country is now engaged in this, the second World War, the greatest struggle of all time. We fight by the side of our Allies for the ideals, policies, and practices of freedom for which Washington and Bolívar fought, and for which Clay strove, and against the cruel and ruthless forces against which they contended, but which, in the present conflict have been magnified by our aggressor enemies a thousandfold. All lovers of liberty, all who favor the concept of freedom for the individual, know that if the great man whose birthday we now celebrate and honor, could be called forth from the tomb and restored to mortal being, his sword and voice, his vital action and leadership, would be joined with the efforts of those who strive, in this truly fateful hour, to strike down the tyrannous and utterly brutal attempt which is being made to subdue and enslave the world; and he would see, today—in this time of unprecedented global conflict and crisis—the absolute need for unity of purpose and endeavor on the part of the western nations. Whether we will it, or no, we shall stand or fall together. Thus it is written in the stars, and thus Bolívar visioned it more than a century ago.

